

Psychology of Bhakti Movement

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Introduction: The Bhakti movement has been perceived and interpreted as a counter response or operation launched against the dominant and imposition of the religion of rulers on the people of India during 14th century of current era (hereinafter mentioned as CE). The Leftist historians have also started dubbing it as an ideology perpetuated with or without the royal patronage to consolidate properties and exercise political power in the society¹. While Hindu religion being accommodative, universal, flexible satisfying all aspects of human needs, in broad perspective, it had to face with challenges from different alien, opposed, contradicting religious sects within and outside because of the rapid social admixture, turmoil and disturbance took place.

Those opposed forces created an impression that the religion followed by Hindus was futile, obsolete and valueless. It was actually accompanied with action. Temples and idols were destroyed and demolished to prove the inaction of their Gods and Goddesses. The mosques built at or on the same spots threw a challenge that the old God ran away or deserted and the new God had taken over the place. The new scriptures read, rites and rituals conducted and at the same time restrictions imposed on their religious activities frustrated common people and started doubting their God and religion.

Under the circumstances, the responsibility laid squarely on the religious heads and other connected leaders of the people. Though the affected had been all sections of society, the rural people had to suffer considerably on all accounts, as they had been the targets of frequent raids of the alien groups and rulers for all their military and other activities. Therefore, they had definitely devised a Novel method not only to rejuvenate the wounded and hounded Hindus but also to contain the Islamic

onslaught, Thus , the two-prong strategy is revealed in their methodology.

The Application of Psychology to Religion: Till later half of 19th century, psychology had been only the study of soul and then it was applied to study of mind and mental processes connected with body. With the development and advancement of psychology, the religious processes were subjected to psychological concepts and analyzed to find that they were only mind related processes coupled with urges, drives and ambitions. Such revelation relegated scriptures, religion and God to background, Fearing the worst, the religious heads and theologians of the west decided to adapt and adopt psychology for religion. Thus, the integration of psychology and Theology started. *However the application of such methods was noticed in the earlier period in their action against the believers of their religions, in fact, the subject as such has been developed on the lines, as they found psychological methodology served the same purpose, as crusades/jihads, Inquisition/religious persecution, apostate etc, achieved.*

The Integration of Psychology and Theology: Generally, western scholars divide the world religions into *semitic and non-semitic* (no racial connotation please)² based on the theology, philosophy, ethics and other concepts, precepts , practices and following. invariably, they are eastern and western religions. Jews, Christians and Muslims are considered as *Semites and all others non-semite*. The main features of the concepts of their theology are boiled down to the following.

1. The Exclusive God. that too jealous God.
2. Revealed Scriptures, that too infallible,
3. A Messenger of Prophet in between God and Believers, that too with the claim that he is the last one.
4. The only Chosen People of Redemption and salvation with a Right to go to heaven, that too with the call that others would be doomed to hell of fire and so on.
5. The other Non- Chosen people may be redeemed provided they accept the God of scriptures and placed at lower pedestal.

Psychologists too analyzed such attitude and found out that

more psychology was used than theology in the evolution, conception and codification of scriptures with the change of times. In fact, it is nothing but *theologized psychology* is used to keep the believers under control with the threat of death for apostates. The systematic theology and psychology as recognized in Christianity are as follows.³

1. **Theology Proper: Prolegomena** (definitions, the nature and necessity of theology, divisions of theology and presuppositions). **Theism** (definitions and existence of God), **Bibliology** (scriptural revelation and inspiration), **Theology** (the nature, decrees and works of God).
2. **Anthropology**: Origin (the creation of the human being), Nature, Character and Functioning of the Human Being, Fall (the introduction of sin into the human race).
3. **Hamartiology**: Nature (the definition and essential principle of sin), Universality, Origin.
4. **Soteriology**: Election and calling, Faith, justification, Regeneration, adoption, conversion, Sanctification, Repentance, persevaerance.
5. **Christology and Pneumatology**: Incarnation, person of Christ, Offices of Christ, hypostatic Union.
6. **Ecceiesiology**: Meaning (the doctrine and defination of the Church), nature, Founding, Ordnances, Relationships and Leadership.
7. **Eschatology**: Second Coming, Resurrections, Judgments Millennium, final State,
These theological aspects are correlated, compared and researched with the following psychological aspects:
 1. **Science of Psychology**: Foundations of Psychology, Definations, Presuppositions,
 2. Personality theory nature character and Functioning of the Human being (including learning, perception memory and emotion).
 3. **Psychopathology (abnormal psychology)**: Nature, origin and Consequences of pathological Functioning.
 4. **Developmental Psychology**: Stages of Growth and Concepts of Maturity.

5. **Counselling :** Personality, Preparation and role of the counsellor.
6. **Social Psychology:** Social organization, Nature of Groups, Formation of Groups and Attitudes , Interpersonal Dynamics, Leadership.
7. **Psychology of Motivation:** Expectations, Rewards.

The Christian example is taken only for illustrative purposes. As the subject of philosophy was converted into psychology and applied to religion specifically. Churches always had to get data and details from hospitals and therefore, hospitals themselves were started built by the Churches or the existing hospitals taken over by them for their research. During the medieval periods, under the inquisition, many experiments were conducted subjecting the accused offenders of religion. Women were perhaps the worst victims of inquisition, as they were burned at stake declared them as witches. The witch hunting was continued with the Church support till the early 19th century. In Islam, such women were chained, treated and subjected to cruelties as possessed. The exorcism associated with Jesus and Mohammed has been a hot topic for the respective researchers⁴. IN fact both have been considered as the best exorcists on the earth by the respective believers. Thus the theology of the west has gone to hospitals, factories, educational institutions, politics and other places, whereas that of the east remains inside the temples only, Now, the important features of religion are discussed.

My God is Your God, Your God is NO God: The concept that My God is Your God, Your God is No God was perplexing to Hindu believers. For them God is God. That changing God, one should change religion, culture, tradition and heritage was also intriguing and puzzling to them. That is why, the syncretic and eclectic religious leaders started advocating that all Gods are one and the same and so on. But that too was objected by them because they declared that Allah was the only God ! As there were *daughters of Allah* in Arabia⁵. (Quran LIII.19-20) he may be having sons in india , As all Hindus loved, considered and respected Allah also as a God. And so also Jehovah, mary, christ, Buddha, Mahavira, Azhur Mazda and so. on Their religion had been so

accommodative to have one more dozen of Gods. This only proves the democratic nature, freedom of worship and the individual right to have union with God of religion of Hindus.

But, such accommodative psychology is not there in the semitic religions proves the negation of divinity of humanity, theology of nature and theosophy of Universe leading to exclusivist, water-tight and narrow outlook of religion.

God versus God: An unfortunate situation was created as God was placed before another God or rather islamic God was placed before the Hindu Gods to accuse defame and blaspheme Hindus, Though their Gods and Goddesses themselves of different Sizes, shapes and colours with terrifying looks, arms and weapons, they punished only evil, cruel and wicked people, but not ordinary, innocent and other people. They never thought that worshipping idols, conducting rites and rituals, and performing pilgrimages were crimes inviting the wrath of the Islamic rulers and clergy. Attacking other Gods and beliefs, which was hitherto unknown, was crept into Indian society only because of this alien iconoclast attitude.

Psychology of God: The God of Muslims as claimed by them based on Quran was the only God or if at all there was any God, the God could be called only by the name Allah. No other God could be placed before him. IN fact, the biblical God, Jehovah categorically asserted⁶ that there was no God above or below him ! Here, the important question arises is that of the *God/the Real God/ the only God knows that he is the God/the Real God/ the only God, then how he knows then existence of other Gods or the God above or below him and why he is afraid of him ?*

This shows that God was created by man, in other words, the arrogance, exclusivism and colonial mentality of man had been put through the words of God so that the gullible, naive and innocent believers would fear and accept, Otherwisec fear was created through violence, crimes and what no as has been faithfully recorded in their own scripture and history. Fear of God was induced not only through the figure of Gods, but also through advising not doing any evil act in Hindu religion. But in non Hindu religions, fear was createdd through men in the minds of

men by cruel action of men in the name of God ! of course. the God Himself had been so Jealous, Cruel and always asking for the blood of non- believers! May peace be Upon Him !

Can God be changed by Believer? The concept of changing of God was also never taught of or thought of by Hindus, as they respected all and everything as Divinity or representations of God. But now, they had to accept either lelem or even death. Though, God was the most Beneficent, Merciful, and benevolent, they were as dark as to why the believers of such God should be so cruel, ruthless and savage, They could not understand the Jihad or holy war waged against them treating as kafirs, They knew that God was one, eternal, immutable and unchangeable, But calling with different name, with different culture, tradition and heritage, the representatives of New God forced them to accept their God as God, Thee Hindus accepted, but it did not stop with that. Again they coerced that they should forget their old Gods, for that they had prove their loyalty through external gestures and actions.

People with Books and without Book; The concept of people with books and people without books proves the exclusive religious arrogance of the declarers. Here, the actual claim made is that they are alone the believers, who have received the Word of God i.e. the scriptures revealed to them directly from their God, which is totally infallible. Ironically, these declarers only have destroyed and burned maximum number of scriptures and valuable books of believers of other religions during their crusades and jihads. The Muslims divide the entire world into *Dar -al-Islam* and *Dar-ai-harab*, people into *momins* and *kafirs* and kafirs into protected kafirs known as *zimmis* If they pay *Jizya* and unprotected kafirs, if they do not pay jizya. Similar concepts are available in Christianity also. And thus, if they find the scriptures of others, they do not recognize or respect, in extreme cases they even destroy or consign it to fire as noted above.

Killing for Religion and Being get Killed For Religion: Killing for religion has been the religious duty of alien believers to become saviour of their religion. Inspired by the scriptural Injunctions, they considered It as sacred duty and carried on to please their God. The more heathens, kafirs, Infidels or non-

believers, he kills, the more he is glorified in his hagiography and religious history. But, the phenomenon had been in reverse in India. When the invading or settled forces started attacking temples, mutts and ghats, the Hindus did not resist with arms. They offered themselves before the blood sucking word. Hundreds and thousands were killed thus in protecting many temples. A new meaning was connected to the words martyrdom thought thought and action. yes, devotees died for God, religion, temples, scriptures, pilgrimage, rites, rituals, festivals, ceremonies and so on without rising their arms. Many people fell dead only with names of God on their lips. Even the killers shouddered to witnes the phenomenon.

Why Man Wanted God and Religion? Being a part of the world, Universe and Cosmos, its wonderful arrangement, natural happenings and benefits offered have made him to realize a super power, that is conceived, perceived and theologized as God. Modern psychologists have hypothesized and theorized the possibility of man's dependence on God and religion. They resorted to analyze the soures of religious Behaviours as follows:

1. **Tghe Instinct Theory:** Man has inherited, natural and curious attitude to know about things, processes, actions ad reactions taking place around him. He wants to know the cause and effect of such happenings.
2. **The Social learning Theory:** As a man is part of society, he learns about religion through this parents, friends and others since childhood. His interactions with religious activities moulds him when grows with religion.
3. **Frustration Theory:** All psychosomatic desires, urges, needs and ambitions of man are not fulfilled. Therefore, he feels that he is thwarted, disappointed or defeated, He tries to reduce this by Identification, displacement, sublimation and other defense machanisms.
4. **Conflict Theory:** Religion is an outcome of confilict of two opposing tendenscies or between two parts of the personality of any man possaesed by him. Regression (going back to simpler level of existence) helps man to some extent to come over conflicts. It requires something to hold on.

However, it is unfortunate that the religion, God, Scriptures and places of worship have made men to behave differently.

Antidote and Panacea Offered: To counter these violent, atrocious and inhuman acts, Bhakti movement was devised as the most non-violent method. It does not mean that it was invented only during the material period but adapted and adopted from the existing system with modification to suit the exigencies. It is personal approach and relationship of man with his personal God without any fear or favour. His approach to God can be in any manner, i.e. he can consider and treat him as his mother, friend, child, lover, servant and so on. He can worship or ignore, but his God does not threaten with hell of fire, infest of locusts and so on!

The Psychology of Violence and Non-violence: Violence and aggression are two faces of brute that is grown with hardened hatred, conditioned contempt and acrimonious animosity against targeted people and their symbols. Such attitude and behaviour do not come to any personality, unless they are taught, nurtured and developed since childhood or at later date with definite indoctrination. *Violence is, any action Initiated with Intention to hurt or Injure other physically or psychologically and thus, the most immoral orime committed creating disturbance among people groups, outraging all social norms and decency leading to injustice inflicted on humanity.* The intensity of brutality, savagery and severity of violence has been the outcome of trained, brainwashed and conditioned minds. That too, when it is conceived, nurtured, implemented and perpetuated in the name of God, religion and scripture, it is the most inexplicable heinous offense against humanbeings. Again, when it is launched against meek, mild and Innocent people, it is the worst form of barbarity to the core.

Thus, the psychology of violence unmasks the midst of the believer who wages holy war or jihad against the so-called non-believers by calling names from their dictionary of theology. It exposes as to how the cruelty of God is transferred, transplanted and acted through the equally cruel believers and followers of him. it reveals the scriptural sanction of violence in the name of spreading the word of God or Good News to everybody.

Thus, they want to destroy all that belonged to non-believers, infidels or kafirs as decided by them, *Theological violence and faithful aggression perpetrated with scriptural sanction and assumed divine Inspiration cross all psychological barriers leading to calculated lootings, burning scriptures, orchestrated iconoclasm, dogmatic demolitions, artistic vandalism, neurotic incendiarism, beastly molestations, blood-curing infratricides and human genocide.* But the indulging warriors cannot wipe out everything as they think, because they too know very well that matter can neither be created nor destroyed. However, history tells how the Mayans, Incas and Aztecs were totally exterminated with their civilizations almost breaking down with their structures and cities. In extreme cases, they become frustrated and try to take over, modify or superimpose the existing things with external embellishment.

Physical Violence and verbal violence had been the part of these crusaders depending upon the people groups and places where they were operating. In fact, the verbal violence had been the worst form than the physical violence.

On the other hand, the psychology of non-violence is gentleness, lenience and mildness nature of man inculcated with tenderness, grace and tolerance. It is not preached, but followed and practiced in thought and action. It spreads good will, peace and happiness on the earth, embraces all with love and compassion and unifies to Cosmos for eternity. Thus, *non-violence can be defined as the refined and conditioned mental status of non-allowance of any thinking that may cause or likely to cause physical or psychological injury to any other living things, including human-being.* Its main characteristic is self-suffering and suffering for others. Getting slapped on both cheeks, bearing all beatings, receiving blows, accepting punches and withstanding lashes without raising a hand against. Without understanding the significance, the aggressors may exploit the condition of such people, but in long run, they are the losers and the sufferers the victors.

Bhakti- The Most Non-Violent Movement on the Earth:

Thus, in Bhakti, the total non-violence is followed. Even in mind no opposing or conflicting thought is entertained. The Believer

has to crave for the love of God, cry and weep for his mercy and benevolence and reap boons and benefits, He need not cajole him or bribe him with incense, sacrifice and rituals. Naturalized form of worship teaches the respect to nature, as he uses flowers, leaves and water worships nature and its representatives and manifestations: protects such nature without any destruction, exploitation and imbalance.

It is not animism, fetishism, hedonism, pantheism or any level of degraded form of belief as dubbed by modern interpreters, It is not heretic, skeptic, nihilist, agnostic or cynical as nicknamed by western elucidations, It is not barbarism, paganism, heathenism or kafirism as disparaged by the arrogant believers of religious superiority. Incidentally, the most violent nature of their verbal violence often exhibited in scholarly terrorism is revealed in this select vocabulary and violent theology.

Bhakti versus Devotion: Bhakti is invariably translated and equated with devotion. But etymologically, conceptually and theologically it has different connotation, meaning and application. *Devotion* is expressed as dedication, affection eagerness and piety to God. *Dedication* is consecration, sanctification celebration and glorification. Affection is love, regard, friendship, respect and endearment. *Eagerness* is adoration, loyalty, enthusiasm and fidelity. *Piety* is grace, faith and religion itself. But, the only one word Bhakti encompasses all concepts, meanings and states of devotee. Thus, in the *stages* of Bhakti all these aspects can be noticed as detailed below.

The Methodology of Bhakti: As already mentioned Bhakti is the personal approach of any devotee to his God, where his act is the most loved one by God.

He can make God his father. mother. sister. brother and friend: He can treat him as his master or servant: he can consider him as his lover or wife :

None can question his freedom.

He can worship him at any time, by any means and at any place, with or without form or in any form, no restriction to him.

He can pay his tribute through words or leaves or flowers or water, no demand from or rejection by God.

In fact, it proves directly that God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient, Does it not the easiest way to have union with God without hate or love, scourge or shower, fear or favour? Narada Bhakti Sutras (81) enumerate the following stages of bhakti to reach God:

1. *gunamahatmya* (glorifying His qualities).
2. *rupa* (attachment to His form).
3. *Puja* (worship),
4. *smarana* (constant remembrance),
5. *dashya* (serving Him as a servant),
6. *Sakhya* (moving with Him like a friend),
7. *Vasalya* (kindling with Him like a child),
8. *Kantha* (being together like a lover or wife),
9. *atmanivedhana* (complete surrender to Him),
10. *tanmayate* (absorption into the Divine) and
11. *paramaviraha* (burning anguish of separation).

According to Bhagavata Purana (VII.5.23) , the main features of expression of bhakti towards God are as follows:

1. Sravanam -listening/ hearing God's name attentively,
2. Kirtanam -chanting. Singing glory of his God according to his capacity of lyrics accompanied with or without musical instruments, Dancing according to the tune of God accompanied with or without musical instrument.
3. Smaranam -Constant remembering Concentrating of God with subjective or objective symbolism. Repetition of the name of God mentally or orally, that is favorable to the devotee,
4. Padasevanam -worshipping the feet of the God,
5. archanam -performing puja,
6. vandanam - prostrating,
7. dashyam -serving like a servant with complete obedience,
8. Sakhyam -being together like a lover or wife or making friendship,
9. atmenivedhanam - surrendering in total

So classify the above a lower level of bhakti and recommend other methods as higher level of bhakti, However, it may be noted that they include one or more of the above stages. Because of

perfection and conditoning, the experience may go to other stages quickly.

They are ⁸.

1. Bhakti (loving devotion to God),
2. parabhakti (perfected devotion causing mental perception of God),
3. parajnana (ocassional olear glimpoeo of God followed with joy during communion with God and anguish during separation from Him), and
4. Paramabhakti (the climax of bhakti leading to the direct comprehensive, eternal communion with God.

The Indian method of communion with God or God realization takes place through different ways as flowers depending upon the nature, calibre and personality of devotee:

1. Yoga-by performance of Yoga,
2. Bhakti- though bhakti marga,
3. Mantra- by chanting mantras accompanied with yagnas etc,
4. Yantra- worshipping geometraical arrangement of different figures,
5. Jnana - with higher wisdom,
6. Karma- by working or doing one's duty and
7. Laya - by rousing the power of kundalini.

Semitic devotees claim that God does not wait for your prayer, as they have to pray at the prescribed timings. Blut, here neither God nor devotees have presecribed timings for prayers, but God comes to devotee, the moment he chants or sings his name.

Here also institutionalization, systematizati and codiofication of Bhakti movement by the vested people and groups led to usage of external and internal symbolism, accompanied rituals and rites, superimposition of newly invented paraphernalia.

The Defense Mechanism Worked: The defense mechanism of Hindus worked effectively through the Bhakti movement achieving immediate expected results through their gurus. All the above priniciples of Bhakti satisfy the needs of the devotees fulfilling their requirements at different exigencies, The Defense; mechanism is nothing but the instinct of protecting oneself from the inflicting danger or threat posed by anything affecting his life

and day to day activities, which was exhibited in the following ways:

1. Repression: It is the forceful ejection from consciousness of impulses, memories, or experiences that are painful and generate a high level of anxiety.

The victims of Muslims in the name of Islam were many. Therefore, the affected were consoled and calmed with advice to get relief from the traumatic experiences. Slowly, they were cautioned to be restrained and controlled. The weaker ones were assuaged with advice and the stronger ones with future action. They were made to forget the past and come to normalcy.

2. Regression: The act of retreating, moving backward or returning to earlier levels of development.

The morally and otherwise injured were asked to be patient at their respective places waiting for better times.

3. Projection: The action of ascribing one's own traits or attributes to others.

The inflicted were consoled by comparing with others and take solace. They were also characterized with others so that raging, pressurized and boiling feelings were brought under control.

4. Identification: The process of recognition or reacting one situation in the same manner in which one reacted in a previous situation or associating oneself closely with a group or cause. The old examples were cited to be followed. They were asked to rise to the occasion just like their Gods and heroes.

5. Fantasy: The process of imaging objects or events in terms of imagery. In its normal range, it serves both a creative and adjustive function.

Temporarily, this process soothed their urges, drives and impulses, with inspiration of their heroes and Gods, they started getting mental strength.

6. Compensation : The process of engaging in substitute behaviour in order to make up for social or physical frustration or a lack of ability in a certain area of personality. The inbuilt or inherent character or strength of persons were identified, recognized and chosen for action.

7. Sublimation: The redirection of socially unacceptable

impulses into acceptable or more acceptable channels.

All members were encouraged to come out with their contribution according to their participatory level.

8. Reaction formation: The development of a personality trait, which is the opposite of the original, unconsciousness, or repressed trait,

As only non-violence was perceived, preached and practiced instead of violent, non-violent actions effected for the benefit of the people, society and nation.

9. Aggression: A hostile attack directed against a person or thing or vigorous pursuit of ones goals for achieving anything in society or nation.

Here, instead of physical aggression, aggression of love and non-violence was followed with the opponents and adversaries. The victims were more and more compelled to undertake the bhakti method of salvation instead of resorting to physical violence.

10. Retribution: Expressing and transforming affected impulses to others. It is not taking vengeance, but teaching a firm lesson to the opponents, because of the sufferings inflicted. The showered love and affection in such a way that the perpetrators of crimes and atrocities themselves ashamed of their activities.

Here, anyone can notice as to how the affected, injured, hurt, wrecked, impaired and concerned men, women and children were psychologically treated with the processes of Bhakti. Had they not been dealt with so or otherwise, the defense mechanism would have made them to react and oppose leading to counter-violence. Therefore, the leaders of Bhakti movement had handled the situation and connected people so cautiously for the welfare of the nation. Thus, more and more temples were built, renovated and consecrated; pilgrimages and tirtha yatras increased with the list of 12 jyotirlingas, 51 Saktipithas, 108 Vaishnavite holy places, and so on: festivals hitherto celebrated in the past or restricted to one particular area was made to be celebrated at all places: Thus, the national consciousness was roused with the ordinary people and their movement from one part to another part increased considerably. in spite of the Thus the bhakti movement had been an all India phenomena and not restricted to any particular area,

language speaking people or followers religion of India.

From God Loving to nation Loving: The Muslims consciously or otherwise had resorted to imitate Hundu Gods and rulers, in spite of their anarchy and anti-Hindu attitude. They struck coins with Hundu Gods and Goddesses on one side with Islamic paraphernalia on the other side. However, this was done only to capture the economy and not with any love for them. The traditional capital Indiraprastha, Delhi was chosen as their capital also, though they never conquered or ruled Bharat completely. The court chroniclers too eulogized the Muslim rulers comparing them with Hindu Gods. Thus, the Hindus had prime duty to save their national symbols besides temples and temple properties.

A clear-cut shift noticed during the material period was the transformation in the attitude of the devotees from the God Loving to nation Loving. It may not be exaggerated to say that the word Nation replaces the word God. Later, it was personified with Mother, To translate the above stages of bhakti to God into patriotism to nation, it can easily be understood as to how a citizen had to sacrifice everything. Thus, the devotees had directly swung into action to save the idols of many famous temples by taking away them and hiding in safer places, later to be consecrated, instead of depending upon the rulers, as they were more interested in protecting their throne than the nation.

As Swami Vidyanaraya had been the prime mover of Vijayanagara Empire, Ramdas had been for Maratha Empire.

Ramdas' cry was

"Places of pilgrimage have been desecrated: homes of Brahmans have been destroyed: the entire earth is agitated: Dharma is gone, Hence, the Marathas should be mobilized: Maharashtra Dharma should be rallied and filled with a singleness of purpose: sparing no effort, we should crash upon the Mlecchas".

The atrocities inflicted on the Hindu society had been so intense that the religious leaders had advocated the unique ahimsa / non-violence against the organized violence. The more the Muslims trampled upon the rights of Hindus, the more they were awakened to act against them following ahimsa.

Conclusion: Contrary to the claims of modern writers, caste

system became more rigid, because of the carrying away of Hindu women during their military and other operations and conversion activities of Muslims. Restrictions were imposed in taking back such women and men into Hindu fold again. However, equality caste, their participation in religious activities etc were stressed. As there was difference among the Muslims themselves on the base of denomination (Sunni, Shi etc), race (arab, non-Arab etc with tribal consciousness), theology (belief in rebirth invisible imams, Prophet-hood etc), the converted Hindus were placed only at the lowest pedestal of the Muslim society, according to their earlier caste affiliations.

In fact, the women were subjected to all kinds of crimes during the Muslim rule. Purdah system was introduced into the Hindu society as the Muslims carried away Hindu women and girls by force and forced them to the lecherous, licentious and lewd activities, ultimately dumping in harems and selling as slaves, child marriage and sati were other social aberrations crept into Indian society, as the Hindus did not want their young girls to be carried away by force and the wives of killed kings and soldiers did not want to lose their honour by the lecherous Muslim armies and rulers. Here the clear marked deviation took place is to be noted. Sati is different from jowhar. Sati is voluntary or compulsory act of falling into funeral pyre of dead husband, but jowhar is the act of falling into fire raised and kept ready inside precincts of fort or palace. the moment wives or ladies came to know that their husbands were killed in the battle. On the other hand, the free movement of Muslim women was restricted. Feroz thuglak (1351-88) prohibited women even from visiting the tombs of holy men outside cities.

The movement had not been anti-Brahminic or anti-vedic, as suggested by some scholars, as the songs/bhajans appear to criticize vedas, rituals, rites and ceremonies, As ultimately, the concepts of Vedas only were adapted and adopted in them for easy following by people of all the sections of society.

Thus, Bhakti movement as perceived and conceived during the material period effectively countered and checked the Mohammedan onslaught on the religion of Hindus.

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